

U.S./USSR/
ABM TREATY

MACNEIL: A high level group of former officials, said today that President Reagan's so-called Star Wars proposal for missile defense, would breach a major treaty with Moscow. It is the ABM treaty negotiated by the Nixon administration in 1972 to limit anti ballistic missile systems. The group, calling itself The National Campaign to Save the ABM Treaty, says development of Mr. Reagan's missile defense system, quote, 'will end the most significant arms control agreement in existence.' The group includes former President Carter, former secretaries of state Russ, Vance and Muskie, and two former CIA directors, Colby and Turner. One of those presenting the argument at a Washington News conference was Gerard Smith, chief U.S. negotiator at the talks which produced the ABM Treaty. GERARD SMITH (Former Arms Control Negotiator): Now the Star Wars proposal of last year, in its essential element is cause for a nationwide defense. The heart of the ABM Treaty is a flat ban on nationwide defenses. And that, it seems to me, is the central contradiction, that one should think of. There are all sorts of arguments about what the treaty permits in the way of development and what it permits in the way of research. But the central contradiction is that our, explicit national goal now is in complete opposition to the flat ban in the ABM Treaty. The administration talks about the possibility of amending this treaty to permit the sort of thing they're going after. And to my mind, that's like talking about amending the *Bolstead Act of prohibition days to permit the sale of liquor. It's just a legal nonsense.

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